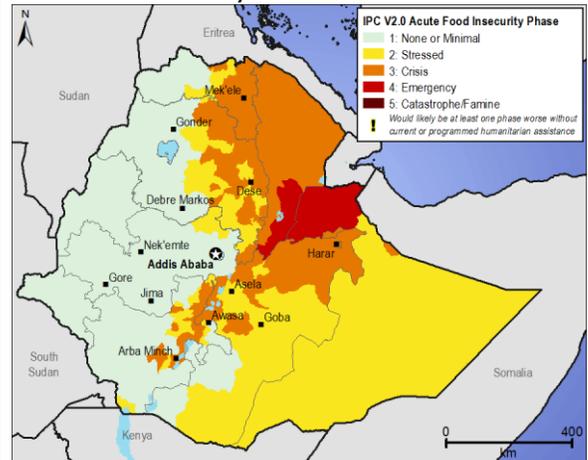


*Large-scale food security emergency projected for 2016*

**KEY MESSAGES**

- In 2015, eastern Ethiopia had a severe drought. The drought contributed to low crop production for both the *Belg* and *Meher* harvests, poor livestock health, low water availability, and lack of demand for agricultural labor.
- A major food security emergency is projected for the coming year. Already, some northern pastoral areas have moved into Emergency (IPC Phase 4).
- The [Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team \(EHCT\)](#) has [early estimates that 15 million people will likely need food assistance in 2016](#), around half covered through the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) and the rest through emergency assistance. Needs are likely to be particularly high in July and August 2016 during the peak of the lean season in *Meher*-producing areas. In many areas of the country, lean season may start early this year.
- The most food insecure areas include southern Afar and northern Somali Region, areas already in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) in October. Also, the lowlands of East and West Hararghe Zones are expected to move into Emergency (IPC Phase 4) from January to March 2016.
- Other areas at risk of Emergency (IPC Phase 4) include lowlands in Arsi and West Arsi Zones in central Oromia and some areas in the northeastern highlands, including parts of Wag Himra and North Wollo Zones in Amhara. These areas are currently projected to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through March.

Current food security outcomes, October 2015



Source: FEWS NET

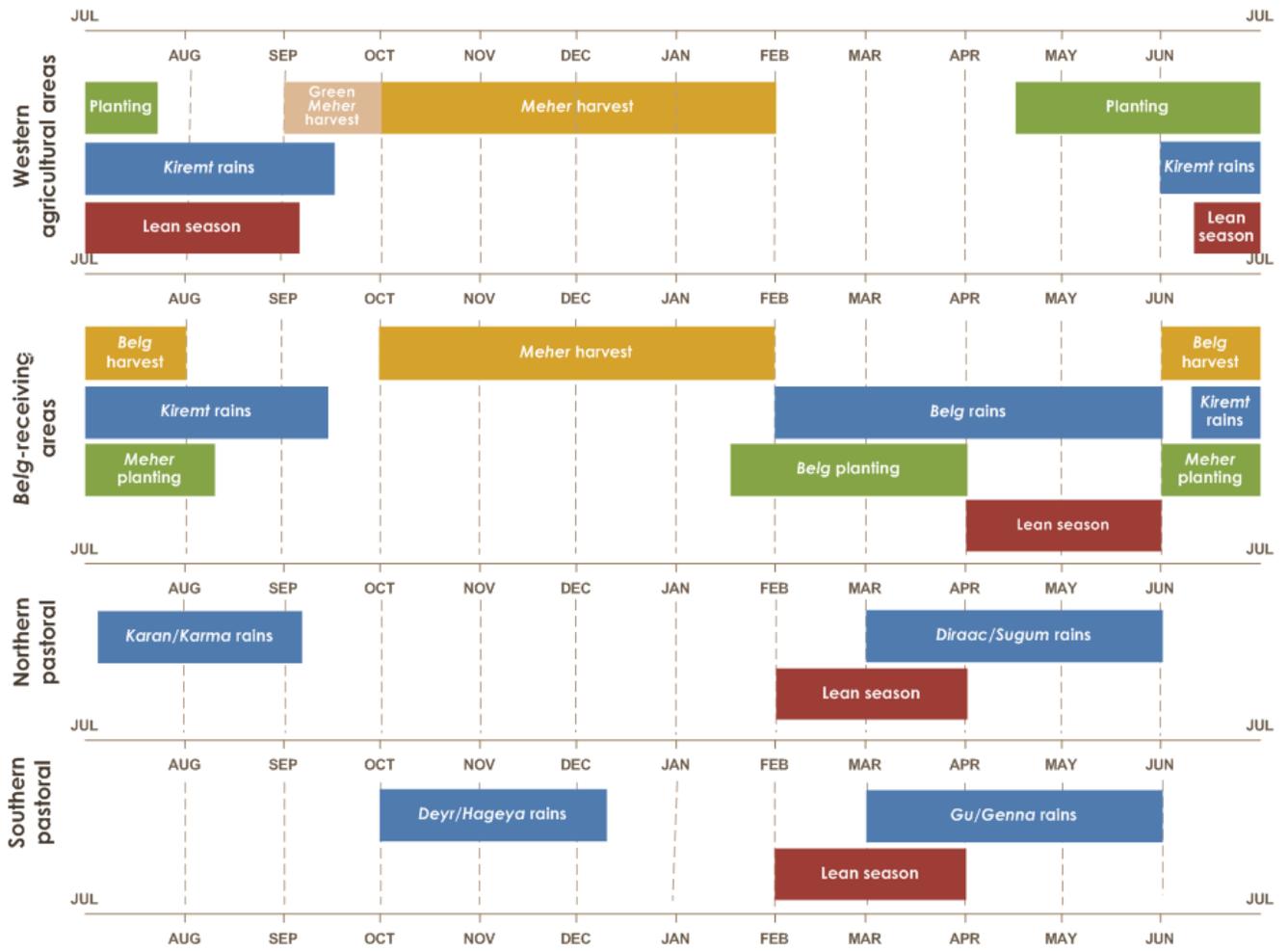
This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. To learn more about this scale, click [here](#). Descriptions of the five area phase classifications used in IPC v2.0 appear below.

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC v2.0) Area Phase Descriptions

PHASE 1 Minimal	Households are meeting their basic food and nonfood needs without unsustainable coping strategies.	
PHASE 2 Stressed	Household food consumption is minimally adequate. Households are unable to afford some essential nonfood expenditures without unsustainable coping strategies.	
PHASE 3 Crisis	Households face food consumption gaps or are only meeting minimal food needs through unsustainable coping strategies.	URGENT ACTION REQUIRED
PHASE 4 Emergency	Households face extreme food consumption gaps or are experiencing extreme loss of livelihood assets that will likely lead to food consumption gaps.	
PHASE 5 Famine	Households have a near complete lack of food and/or other basic needs. Starvation, death, and destitution are evident.	
!	Phase classification would likely be worse without current or programmed humanitarian assistance.	

Source: [Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Technical Manual Version 2.0](#)

SEASONAL CALENDAR IN A TYPICAL YEAR



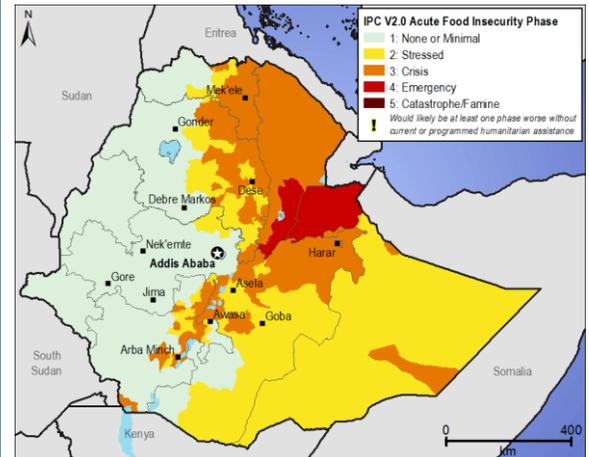
Source: FEWS NET

## NATIONAL OVERVIEW

### Current Situation

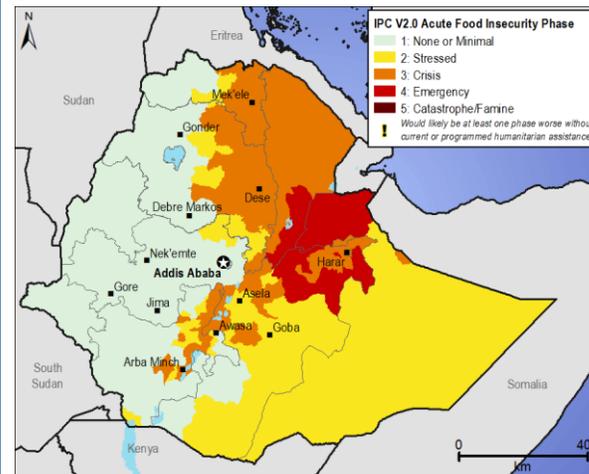
- The [June to September Kiremt rains](#) started late and both June and July were very dry in eastern cropping areas, including northeastern Amhara, eastern Tigray, central and eastern Oromia, and the lowlands along the Rift Valley in Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) (Figure 1). Heavier rainfall was concentrated in August. As a result of late rainfall, fewer crops were planted. In many cases, there were more than two replantings. In general, long-cycle crops planted in May and short-cycle *Meher* crops planted in June wilted. Many crops planted later have not yet fully matured.
- In Afar and Sitti (formerly Shinile) Zone in northern Somali Region, both the [March to May Diraac/Sugum rains](#) (Figure 2) and [the June to September Karan/Karma rains](#) started late, were well below average in amount, and had frequent dry spells. With little forage (Figure 3) or water available, many livestock died, primarily in southern Afar and Sitti Zone. Despite early and unusual livestock migration patterns, livestock body conditions have continued to deteriorate, and livestock production has declined. With livestock body conditions poor, prices have fallen and are very low. As a result, livestock-to-cereal terms of trade (TOTs) are very low. Even with ongoing humanitarian assistance, there have been an unusually high number of admissions to nutrition programs in recent months. Therefore, poor households in Sitti Zone and southern Afar are in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) while poor households in other parts of Afar are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).
- Between July and August 2015, admissions to therapeutic feeding programs (TFP) across Ethiopia rose by 30 percent from 32,741 to 43,552 children under the age of five. August 2015 had the highest number of admissions of any month since 2011 (Figure 4). The increase was most dramatic in Oromia, where active screening efforts were intensified and the number of admissions rose from 16,697 children in July to 27,929 children in August. In September, however, TFP admissions fell to 35,130 nationally and to 16,901 in Oromia.
- Due to the low amount of [the February to May Belg rains](#), the national *Belg* harvest in June/July was well below average.
- Normally from August to October, poor households in northeastern Amhara, eastern Tigray, and central and eastern Oromia consume green vegetables, root crops, and the green harvest of *Meher* crops. However, low rainfall throughout the year led to very low soil moisture (Figure 5), making many of these food sources unavailable. There has also been less demand for agricultural labor due to low planted area and poor crop performance.
- In the lowlands of SNNPR along the Rift Valley, including areas in Sidama, Gamo Gofa, Wolayita, Hadiya, Kambata Tambaro, Gurage, and Silte Zones, and Halaba Special Woreda, the harvest of *Belg* root crops and haricot beans along with more recently planted vegetables has led to more access to food in October than in recent months. However, due to the poor condition of many *Meher* crops and a likely below-average harvest, less agricultural labor is being hired than usual. With low incomes from labor, despite mostly stable staple food prices and some fresh produce, poor households are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

Projected food security outcomes, October to December 2015



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, January to March 2016



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. To learn more about this scale, click [here](#).

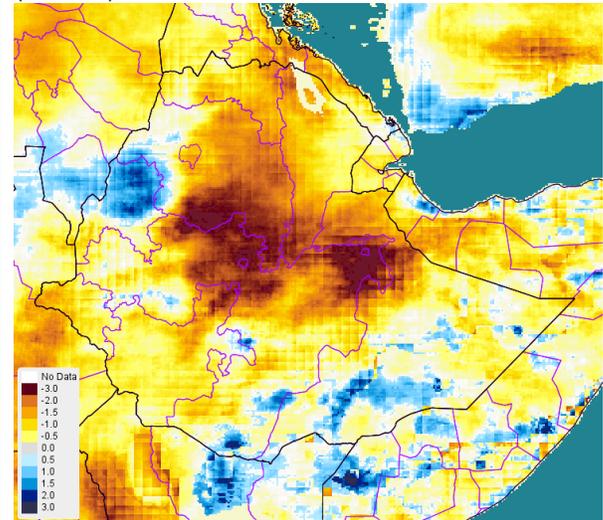
- In eastern cropping areas in northeastern Amhara, eastern Tigray, and central and eastern Oromia, there was very low or no *Belg* production. Households are also not able to access green or dry harvests of *Meher* crops, as many have yet to reach maturity due to the late start of the rains and production is expected to be far below average. Poor households in most of these areas are currently in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).
- In western cropping areas in Tigray, Amhara, Beninshangul Gumuz, western Oromia, Gambella, and western SNNPR, the [June to September Kiremt rains](#) started on time, and were near average in amount with a not untypical distribution. With the *Meher* harvest having started, early indications are that most areas will have a near average harvest. Modeled crop performance using rainfall indicates many western, surplus-producing areas of the country have crops that are “good” or “very good” and expected to continue to perform well through the harvest (Figure 6). These areas are at the seasonal peak of food availability and access and are currently in Minimal (IPC Phase 1).
- In October, the [Government of Ethiopia increased its request for emergency food assistance to cover 8.2 million people from October to December](#).

### Assumptions

From October 2015 to March 2016, the projected food security outcomes are based on the following national assumptions:

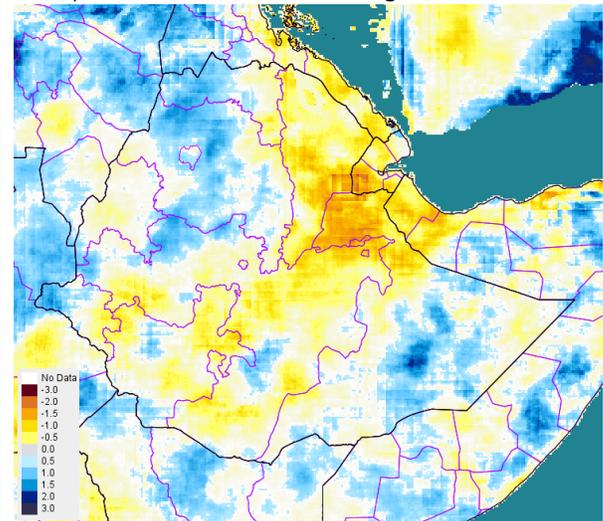
- The *Meher* harvest is likely to be near average in most western areas of the country but well below average in most eastern areas (Figure 6). Overall, the national harvest will likely be below average. This will be due to low planted area for long-cycle crops, delayed planting of *Meher* crops, and lower yields for *Meher* crops. Also, post-harvest losses from October to December are likely to be higher than usual due to likely episodes of unusually heavy rain at that time. In 1997, when an El Niño also contributed to low *Meher* production at a similar time of year, grain production was 23 percent less than 1996, the previous year.
- With less agricultural production, labor demand for harvesting, threshing, and other activities will be less than usual from October to January.
- Due to the delay in the *Meher* harvest, prices will likely not start their seasonal decline until November, remaining near their annual lean season highs in many areas. However, price increases will start earlier this year, likely as early as January due to tight supplies and high demand.
- The government is still planning to import about 600,000 metric tons (MT) of wheat to help stabilize urban food prices in 2016.
- In eastern areas of the country where production will be below average, there have already been spikes in admissions to nutrition programs in August. Several areas have malnutrition prevalence that is high throughout the year or that has a typical seasonal peak that is very high. Once water becomes less available in the dry season, with access to food and water both declining, malnutrition prevalence will likely rise further in February or March. This will be attributed to less

**Figure 1.** July 1 to September 30, 2015 rainfall, anomaly in millimeters (mm) as a standard deviation (SD/z-score) from 2000-2014 mean, using Climate Hazards Group Infrared Precipitation with Stations (CHIRPS) data



Source: [U.S. Geological Survey/FEWS NET](#)

**Figure 2.** March 1 to May 31, 2015 rainfall, anomaly in millimeters (mm) as a standard deviation (SD/z-score) from 2000-2014 mean, using CHIRPS data



Source: [USGS/FEWS NET](#)

food from own production, difficulty making market purchases due to limited incomes, and longer distances to collect water due to drought, leading to worse hygiene and caring practices.

- According to the latest seasonal forecasts by [National Meteorology Agency](#) (Figure 7), [regional](#), and [global forecast centers](#), the October to December *Deyr/Hageya* rains are expected to be above average in southern and southeastern parts of the country (Figure 8). These rains are expected to help increase forage and water availability in the southeastern and southern pastoral areas. They will also support cropping in agropastoral areas. Flooding is likely in river valleys and some lowlands due to episodes of heavy rainfall (Figure 9).
- Resource transfers through the Productive Safety Net Program are expected to take place following the typical schedule from January to June 2016.
- In Arsi, East and West Hararghe, Bale, and Guji Zones in Oromia, and Hadiya, Kambata Tambaro, Sidama, Gedio, Wolayita, and Gamo Gofa Zones in SNNPR, 36 percent of the Ethiopia's coffee production occurs. However, this year below-average June to September *Kiremt* rains in these areas will likely lead to below-average coffee production. This will reduce income from coffee sales for many producers, and reduce income from coffee labor, an important source of income locally in these areas but also a key source of income from migratory labor from other areas of Ethiopia.

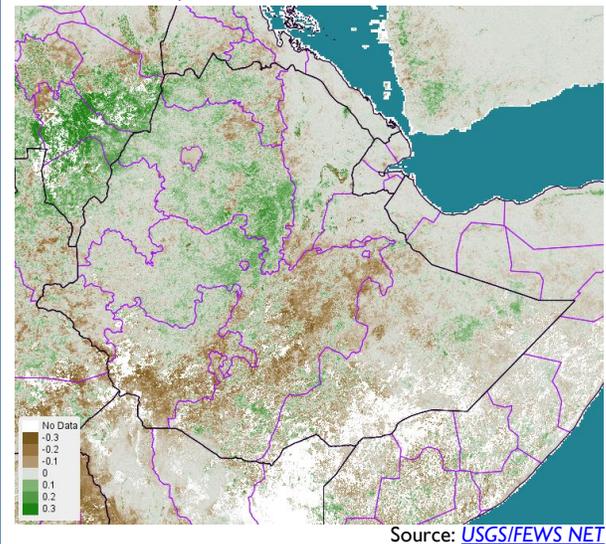
### Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

[Early estimates by the Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team \(EHCT\) were that up to 15 million people will require food assistance in 2016](#). This includes around 7 to 8 million recipients of PSNP and 7 to 8 million people needing emergency food assistance. The highest number of people in need and the most severe food insecurity are likely to be during the peak lean season in *Meher*-producing areas from June to September 2016. Lean seasons across eastern Ethiopia are expected to start much earlier than usual and to have far more severe food insecurity than is present in Ethiopia in a typical year.

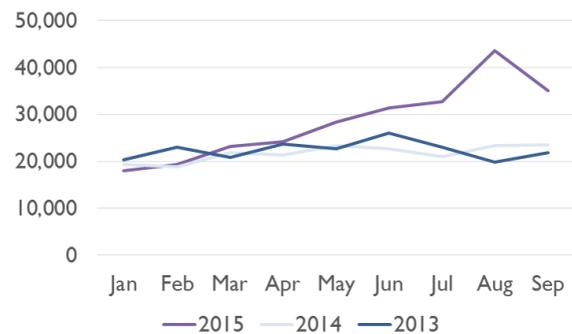
With locally average *Meher* crop production expected in the western and central surplus-producing areas (Figure 6), households will continue to be able to meet their essential food and nonfood needs and remain at Minimal (IPC Phase 1) through at least March. However, with the below-average *Meher* harvest and less income from agricultural labor along with likely increases in staple food prices later in the year, poor households in East and West Hararghe Zones are likely to move into Emergency (IPC Phase 4) as malnutrition becomes even more prevalent. Many areas in central Oromia, northern and eastern Amhara, eastern Tigray, and the lowlands along the Rift Valley in SNNPR are already in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in October, and they are expected to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through much of the coming consumption year. Some areas in central Oromia, northern and eastern Amhara, eastern Tigray, and the lowlands along the Rift Valley in SNNPR are currently in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) in October. These areas are expected to move into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between now and March as households exhaust their meager food stocks and their incomes become inadequate to support food purchases.

Due to the large number of livestock lost in Sitti Zone and southern Afar, the recovery of these assets and associated income will take some time. As households do not gain new sources of income, but cereal prices increase further between now and March, an increasing number of households will be unable to purchase enough food. Poor households in southern Afar and

**Figure 3.** eMODIS Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) anomaly from 2000-2010 mean, October 11-20, 2015



**Figure 4.** National number of admissions to therapeutic feeding programs (TFP), January to September, 2013-2015



Sitti Zone will remain in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) through at least March, but northern and central Afar will be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

Flooding is likely during the above-average October to December *Deyr/Hageya* rains along rivers and lakes in southern Shebelle (formerly Gode) Zone and the lowlands in South Omo Zone in SNNPR. When flooding occurs, cropping will temporarily cease, and it may be difficult to find forage for livestock. Poor households in these areas will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) after the floods until at least December. After flood water recede, normal income-earning activities will resume. After that, these areas will likely improve to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) by March.

After March, as market supplies tighten further, staple food prices will likely rise again. As prices rise and even areas that had relatively better production turn to markets as their primary source of food, food access in many areas will decline. While water availability may improve once the *Belg* rains start, markets will remain tight, even after the *Belg* harvest in June/July. With higher prices, even if labor demand is mostly normal, many households will be unable to purchase adequate quantities of food. Food insecurity will deepen in many *Meher*-producing areas during the peak of the lean season from June to September. Many areas will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in Afar, eastern Tigray, and eastern Amhara, central and eastern Oromia, and central and northern SNNPR. As recovery of assets may take a long time in northern pastoral areas, many households in southern Afar and Sitti Zone may remain in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), in the absence of humanitarian assistance, for much of 2016.

**AREAS OF CONCERN (Figure 10)**

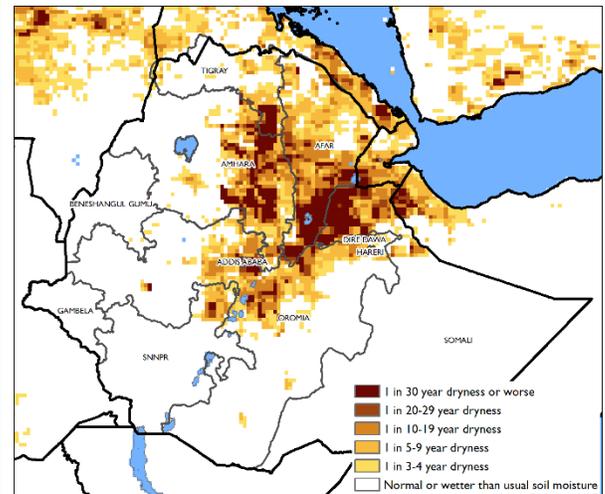
**1. Afar and Sitti (formerly Shinile) Zone in northern Somali Region**

*Current Situation*

The long dry season was followed by both the [March to May Diraac/Sugum](#) and [the July to September Karan/Karma rains](#) being well below average. Both rains started late and had several long dry spells. There were fewer rainy days. For instance, parts of Afar received only three to four days of *Karma* rains throughout the season while normally these areas receive 20 to 25 days of rainfall. Moreover, no rains fell in the lowest elevation areas in Sitti Zone and a few parts of Afar.

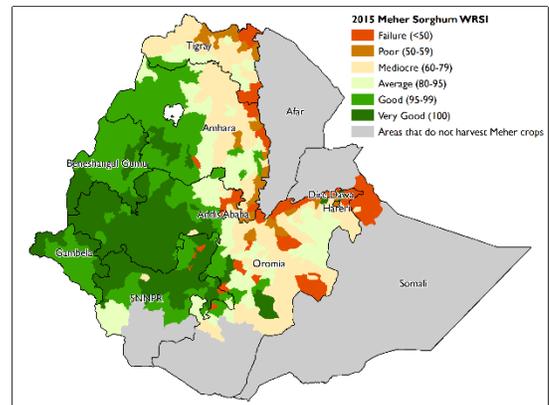
Dry and hot conditions limited forage growth. During the rains in late August, trees and bushes grew, but in most places, pasture did not grow (Figure 11). In some areas, soil seed reserves are no longer present, having been killed by the heat or by livestock trampling or browsing the topsoil, so the rainfall did not bring any growth of grasses for grazing. Forage is difficult to find throughout these regions, but the lack of forage is most pronounced in the lowest elevation areas of Aisha, Shinile, Afedem, Erer, Hadigala, and Meisso Woredas of Sitti Zone in Somali Region, Gewane, Amibara, Dulesa, and Awash Fentale Woredas of Gabi Zone (formerly Zone 3), Mille, Elidar, and Adaar Woredas of Awsi Zone (formerly Zone 1), and Dalul and Berhale Woredas of Kilbati Zone (formerly Zone 2). In Afar, most of the primary rangelands have almost no pasture left, including the Alta, Liyasis, Molale, Kelo, Halydege, Duba, Teru, and Halayten Rangelands. Livestock production and productivity did not ever rise from their dry season levels, and in many cases, they have fallen further. Livestock body

**Figure 5.** Soil moisture anomalies from 1981-present record, October 2015



Source: [FEWS NET Land Data Assimilation Systems \(FLDAS\) data from NASA, processed by USGS/FEWS NET](#)

**Figure 6.** End of season (EOS) water requirements satisfaction index (WRSI) for sorghum planted after March using CHIRPS rainfall estimates



Source: [USGS/FEWS NET](#)

conditions have continued to deteriorate. Neither camel nor cattle milk is available. There was some rainfall in northeastern Afar in October, and there was some growth of pasture and browse as a result, primarily around Teru.

Herd sizes are continuing to fall, as additional unusual deaths of livestock are reported and additional sales are made. Many households are also culling newborns to preserve the life of mature female livestock, keeping herd sizes low for the coming year. More than 200,000 livestock deaths have been reported from Sitti Zone and southern Afar this year.

Humanitarian agencies, the Government of Ethiopia, and local governments are providing grass hay, multi-nutrient blocks, and molasses to feed livestock. 15,450 bales of hay and 17,990 liters of molasses have been distributed since June/July.

From Sitti Zone, livestock have been migrated towards and to Djibouti and Oromia. The highest concentration of livestock can be found in the lowlands near the Oromia-Somali border and in parts of Dire Dawa Administration. Labor migration has also occurred to Djibouti and Oromia. Similarly, from Afar, livestock have been migrated towards and to Amhara, Tigray, and Oromia Regions. Livestock that were migrated in January 2015 during the hot dry season have not yet been returned to areas near homesteads due to the lack of pasture, browse, and water.

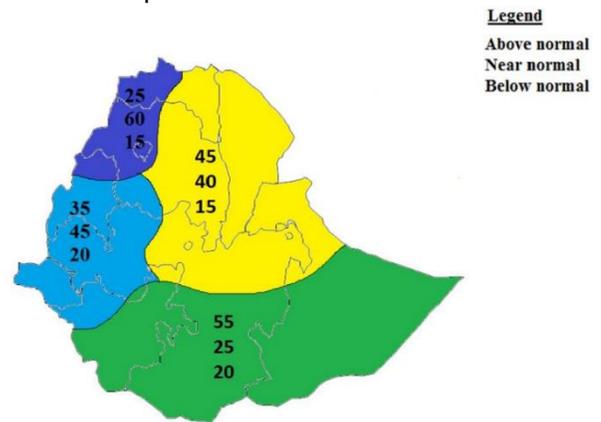
In all agropastoral and agricultural areas of Afar and Sitti Zone, the delayed start of the rainy seasons this year and low rainfall have led to very little crop growth. Most households have failed to harvest crops either in June/July or now in September/October. Yields for crops that did survive are very low.

Water remains very difficult to find. Shallow wells and boreholes are dry, as households have consumed all of their water. In some places, the ground water table has fallen. Water trucking continued in Elidar, Kori, Dubti, Gewane, Berhale, Bidu, and Dalul Woredas in Afar Region using 21 trucks. Similarly, water rationing and trucking is underway in 12 kebeles in Sitti Zone.

Since June, nearly 13,000 households have lost all or almost all of their livestock. In many cases, they lacked water access near their homesteads. As a result, they have moved to 22 sites in nearby areas where food assistance, health services, and water are available. Displacements have occurred in Erer, Afdem, Mieso, Hadigala, and Shinile Woredas. The number of displaced people continues to increase. Households are primarily consuming food assistance though some are raising tiny amounts of income from firewood or charcoal sales or petty trading.

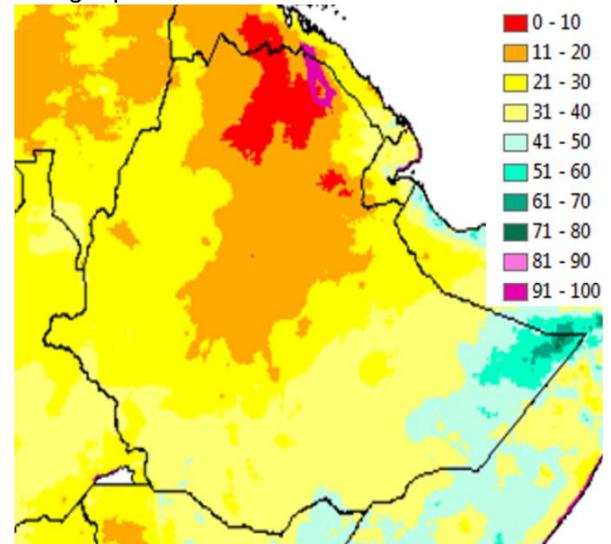
Since March, livestock prices have continued to decline as a result of poor livestock body conditions and high supply as households sell more livestock to buy food. An average-sized goat in September cost 58 and 25 percent less than March in Berhale and Amibara, respectively. At the same time, cereal prices have increased. For instance, a 50 kilogram (kg) sack of maize in September costs 29 and 56 percent more in March in Berhale and

**Figure 7.** October 2015 to January 2016 rainfall forecast compared to historical record



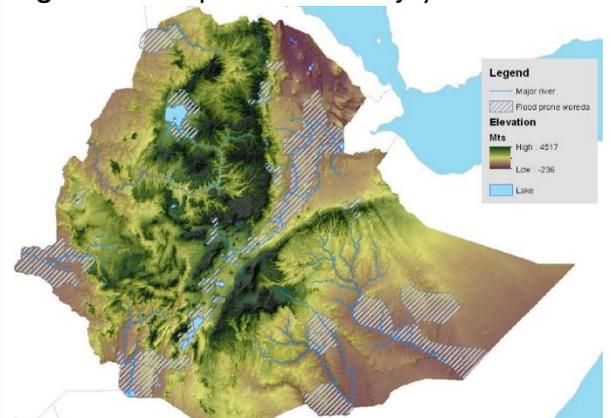
Source: [National Meteorological Agency](#)

**Figure 8.** Percent of 1981-2010 mean annual rainfall during September to December, CHIRPS data



Source: [USGS/FEWS NET](#)

**Figure 9.** Flood-prone areas, as of July 2013



Source: [Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector \(DRMFSS\)](#)

Awash Fentale, respectively. At this point, to buy a single 50 kg sack of maize can cost between one and a half to two goats or sheep. In Shinile in Sitti Zone, an average-sized goat was selling for 43 percent less in September than in March.

The prevalence of malnutrition is likely rising. In Gabi Zone, outpatient therapeutic program (OTP) admissions from January to August 2015 were 16 and 14 percent higher than in 2013 and 2014, respectively. In addition, therapeutic feeding program (TFP) admissions in August 2015 were 16 percent higher than August last year. The bi-annual nutrition survey (BAN2015) conducted in June/July in Adaar, Abala, and Hadelila Woredas of Afar Region reported high malnutrition (GAM) prevalence of 15 percent (95 percent confidence interval (CI) 12.2 to 17.8), 12.3 percent (CI 9.9 to 14.8), and 12.2 percent (CI 9.1 to 15.3), respectively. The nutrition situation is much worse in Sitti Zone in Somali Region. For instance, the BAN2015 in July and August in Dembel Woreda of Sitti Zone reported a GAM and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) prevalence of 19.2 percent (CI 15.4 to 23.7) and 3 percent (CI 1.7 to 5.3), respectively.

With few livestock left to sell, little or no milk to sell and low prices for livestock, households have very little income. There is also less income from agricultural labor, a significant income source in some areas. Despite ongoing humanitarian assistance, poor households in Sitti Zone and southern Afar Region do not have and cannot buy sufficient quantities of food. They have very large consumption gaps and are in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Poor households in other parts of Afar have smaller food consumption gaps and better access to water and are currently in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

**Assumptions**

In addition to the national assumptions above, the projected food security outcomes for Afar and Sitti Zone in Somali Region are based on the following assumptions:

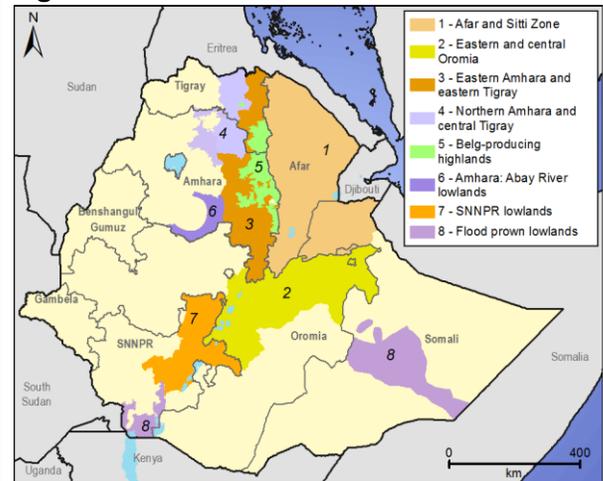
- Normal amounts of *Xays/Dadaa* rains are expected in the eastern areas in December 2015/January 2016.
- The March to May *Diraac/Sugum* rains are expected to start at a typical time in March.
- With no expected improvement in livestock body conditions, livestock prices are anticipated to remain low, near their current levels through March 2016.
- Livestock feed interventions are likely to continue in southern Afar and Sitti Zone.
- Livestock migration from Afar and Sitti Zone towards neighboring regions in search of pasture and water is anticipated to continue.

**Most Likely Food Security Outcomes**

Despite some unseasonal rains forecast for October to December and some very light *Xays/Dadaa* rains being likely in December or January, livestock production and productivity is not expected to increase, and livestock body conditions are likely to remain poor. With no kidding, lambing, or calving likely, herd sizes will not grow.

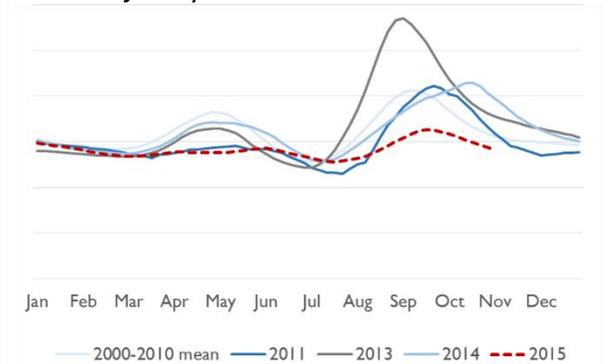
Cereal prices will likely rise starting in January due to low *Meher* production in nearby highlands and in many of the eastern parts of the country. Labor income is likely to remain very low during the October to March long dry season. With no change

**Figure 10. Areas of concern**



Source: FEWS NET

**Figure 11. NDVI, 2000-2010 mean, 2011, 2013, 2014, and January 1-October 30, 2015**



Source: USGS/FEWS NET

in income and higher prices, households will continue to be unable to purchase adequate quantities of food. Households will continue to have food consumption gaps. Poor households in southern Afar and Sitti Zone will remain in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) through at least March 2016. Poor households in other parts of Afar will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through at least March.

Following the start of the March to May *Diraac/Sugum* rains, water availability will increase. Pasture and browse are likely to grow. Some livestock that had been out-migrated would return. However, many households will have very few livestock still, and most households will not have saleable livestock. Without milk to sell or a large increase in labor demand, most households will remain unable to purchase enough food. However, forage and water availability will likely increase further during the July to September *Karma/Karan* rains. Kidding and lambing though are unlikely to occur until September/October 2016. In the meantime, households will need to consume food assistance and food purchased from firewood and charcoal sales. Acute malnutrition prevalence is likely to remain higher than usual throughout 2016.

## 2. Eastern and Central Oromia: East and West Hararghe, East Shewa, North Shewa, and West Arsi Zones

[March to May Belg rainfall was below average](#). It was erratically distributed and punctuated by several long dry spells. The *Kiremt* rains started at a typical time, and there were fairly normal amounts of rain in the middle of June. However, the remainder of the *Kiremt* rains were quite low, and as a result, cumulative [June to September Kiremt rainfall](#) was well below average, with particularly low rainfall in eastern Oromia. Soil moisture is particularly low. In some areas, this is the third year of below-average rainfall. In many areas, the *Kiremt* rains ended in early September, two to three weeks earlier than typical.

Planted area was low. In East and West Hararghe Zones, nearly a quarter of the land typically used in *Meher* production remained fallow (Figure 12). Many seeds that were planted failed to germinate. Crops that did germinate, then wilted and dried out from July to September. After failing to germinate or wilting early in the season, significant areas were replanted with short-cycle crops in eastern Oromia. These low-yielding, short-cycle crops are currently at either at the vegetative stage, but even many replanted crops failed to germinate and become established. Similarly, maize in the lowlands of West Arsi Zone dried out during the flowering and seed-setting stages. Chat, a major cash crop in eastern Oromia, has also had reduced growth and plant vigor due to the drought (Figure 13).

As a result of the dry conditions, pasture and water availability are very low in eastern Oromia. Livestock were migrated during the rainy season as early as June, a time when normally they stay near households, to the river valleys of the Erer, Gobebe, Ramis, and Mojo Rivers in East Hararghe, and of the Wabe, Sakita, Ramis, and Dungota River valleys in West Hararghe Zone. Despite ongoing emergency livestock feed support, livestock body conditions have deteriorated and in many cases are poor. Livestock productivity is below average. In September and October, more than 900 unusual livestock deaths were reported in lowland areas of East Hararghe. An even higher number of unusual livestock deaths occurred in July and August.

As stocks in markets are drawn down, sorghum and maize supply are seasonally low. Prices for both have been increasing since May. With poorer livestock body conditions than usual and low demand at this time of year, livestock prices have been below-average in eastern Oromia. As a result, livestock-to-cereals terms of trade in eastern Oromia, particularly in the lowlands, are below average. In Midaga Tola in East Hararghe, for example, one goat or sheep in September could be sold for 53 kg of maize, 55 percent less than last year.

**Figure 12.** Fallow land, Midaga Tola Woreda, East Hararghe Zone, Oromia Region, September 3, 2015



Source: FEWS NET/World Food Program (WFP)

**Figure 13.** Dried chat bushes, Chiro Woreda, West Hararghe Zone, Oromia Region, August 29, 2015



Source: FEWS NET/WFP

Water availability is far less than usual in eastern Oromia and the lowlands of West Arsi. Water rationing through water trucks is underway in four woredas in East Hararghe and two woredas in West Arsi. An additional five woredas in East and West Hararghe have requested to start water rationing through water trucks.

Malnutrition is becoming more prevalent, especially in the eastern lowlands of Oromia. The recently completed bi-annual standard nutrition survey (BAN2015) conducted in July 2015 in Meiso Woreda in West Hararghe Zone found global acute malnutrition (GAM) prevalence of 14.3 percent (CI 11.2 to 18.1). This is the highest recorded in survey data in Meiso since 2010, with point estimates for GAM prevalence ranging from 7.7 to 13.1 percent over that time period. In August, Oromia accounted for an estimated 64 percent of all admissions to therapeutic feed program (TFP), compared to an estimated 52 percent in 2014 and 2011. Between January and August 2015, TFP admissions increased by more than 650 percent and 190

percent in the West and East Hararghe, respectively (Figure 14). However, in both East and West Hararghe, admissions fell by more than 30 percent between August and September 2015, as would be seasonally expected with the start of the green harvest in some highland areas.

Households were unable to plant long-cycle crops during the *Belg* rains or to grow any short-cycle *Belg* crops, in the areas where *Belg* cropping is possible. Right now, households do not have a green harvest to consume due to delayed maturation of the crops. However, they have just started to consume very small amounts of the green and dry *Meher* harvest. While staple food prices have seasonally increased, households have very little income from livestock sales, chat sales, or agricultural labor. Thus poor households in these areas are not able to buy adequate quantities of food and are currently in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

### Assumptions

No additional assumptions other than the national assumptions described above have been used.

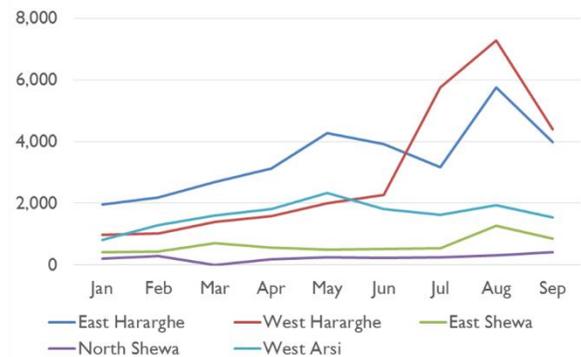
### Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

The *Meher* harvest is likely to be well below average. Household stocks will barely last through the entire harvest period, and poor households will need to purchase from markets for a much longer period than normal during the coming year. However, low incomes are expected from livestock sales, chat sales, and agricultural labor. Poor households in the midlands and highlands of eastern Oromia and the lowlands of West Arsi will be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from October 2015 through at least March 2016.

In the lowlands of East and West Hararghe Zones, many households will have no crops to harvest and those that do will harvest very little. Crops will instead become fodder. With fodder for livestock helping maintain or even slightly improve livestock body conditions, livestock sales will produce some income from October to December. Even households who do harvest will likely have consumed these crops by the end of December. As livestock body conditions deteriorate, having consumed all the crop residues as fodder, milk production will fall. Households who had relied on this income to buy food from October to December will have sold most of their saleable animals. As staple food prices start to increase, poor households will be able to purchase less and less food. They will move from Crisis (IPC Phase 3) for October to December to Emergency (IPC Phase 4) for January to March as their food consumption gaps grow.

Poor and very poor households in the lowlands and midlands of Arsi, West Arsi, and East Shewa Zones will likely have consumed their *Meher* crops by late January instead of in March or April. With low income from livestock sales due to poor body conditions, households will increasingly be unable to afford adequate quantities of food and will move from Stressed (IPC Phase 2) for October to December to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) for January to March.

**Figure 14.** TFP admissions, January-September 2015, selected zones, eastern Oromia



Source: [Ministry of Health/UNICEF](#)

After the start of the *Belg* rains in February or March, land preparation for long-cycle crops will start. In April/May, planting of long-cycle crops will occur. Both of these events will increase demand for agricultural labor, a key source of income for many households. However, with rising food prices, poor households will need to sell more livestock, firewood or charcoal, and find new sources of labor income to buy food. After March, low livestock holdings are likely to limit the amount of food poor households can buy, and labor income will not be enough to purchase adequate quantities of food. Some highland areas may be able to harvest short-cycle crops in June/July from the *Belg*. Many areas are likely to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) beyond March, and some areas such as lowlands in East and West Hararghe may remain in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) through the end of the next lean season in September 2016.

**Figure 15.** Immature teff, Minjar Shenkora Woreda, North Shewa Zone, Amhara Region, September 3, 2015



Source: FEWS NET/WFP

### 3. Eastern Amhara and Tigray: northeastern lowlands and midlands in North Wollo, South Wollo, Oromia, and North Shewa Zones in Amhara, Southern Tigray, and Eastern Tigray

#### *Current Situation*

The June to September *Kiremt* rains started more than four weeks late in some areas, and they ended a week or two early. [Cumulative June to September rainfall](#) was below average. Rainfall station data from Ofla and Samre Woredas indicate that compared to last year, these woredas received only 50 and 33 percent of cumulative 2014 rainfall by the end of September, respectively. Most areas did not receive any rainfall in September.

With the late start of the rains, the *Meher* crops were mostly not planted until early August. Only a few areas were able to plant in June and July during the normal planting window. In most of these areas, high-yielding, long-cycle sorghum is typically planted in May, but this year, households had to substitute short-cycle, low-yielding sorghum varieties in August. *Meher* crops would typically be mature or being harvested in October, but they are only at the late growth to seed-setting stages. Most of the crops planted in August wilted or dried up. Most households have not consumed any green harvest in September or October, as would normally occur at this time of year. In some cases, livestock have already been brought to the fields to consume the crop residues.

In June and July, the unusually dry conditions led to a very low supply of forage and water for livestock. In July and early August, livestock feed interventions occurred to help preserve livestock health. Heavier rains in August, increased the availability of pasture and water. In addition to forage or emergency fodder provisions, some livestock are consuming crop residues. Access to water for livestock is continuing to decline over time, and livestock are being trekked across longer distance than usual to get water. Despite poor livestock body conditions and low livestock productivity, unusual livestock deaths have not been reported. Local authorities have requested water trucking in Minjar Shenkora of North Shewa and Argoba Woreda in South Wollo.

In general, staple food prices have been increasing since April or May. Some markets have much higher prices than last year. For example, in Tenta in South Wollo, the September retail sorghum price of ETB 1,200 per 100 kg sack was 71 percent higher than last year, when in September, a 100 kg sack of sorghum cost ETB 700. At the same time, as livestock body conditions deteriorated and local demand remained low, livestock prices fell. In particular, cattle prices are low. For example, an ox in Weldia in September cost 30 to 35 percent less this year than last year.

Child Health Day (CHD) nutrition screenings for children under five years old in July have identified additional cases of moderate (MAM) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in North Wollo and North Shewa. In North Wollo, 29,185 children were screened and 3,298 cases of MAM were found and 264 of SAM, 12 percent of the children. This is much higher than in March/April when 23,493 children were screened in North Wollo, and 1,278 had MAM and 121 had SAM, only five percent of the children screened. Similarly, in North Shewa Zone, 69,342 children were screened in July, and 10 percent were found to be moderately or severely acutely malnourished.

In October, households are not consuming the green harvest as they typically would at this time of year. They have less income from agricultural labor, other forms of labor, and livestock sales than usual. With staple food prices higher than last year and less income, households have food consumption gaps and are currently in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

#### Assumptions

No additional assumptions other than the national assumptions described above have been used.

#### Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

The *Meher* harvest from November to January is likely to be well below average. Even with forecast, unusual, non-seasonal rainfall between October and December, crops are unlikely to recover and will continue to have very low yields. However, there is likely to be slightly more crop production in the midlands of northeastern Amhara. With little income from labor and livestock sales and continued rises in staple food prices, households over time will be able to purchase less food. With continued food consumption gaps, they will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

As staple food prices continue to rise after March, households will be able to purchase less food. As land preparation for long-cycle crops begins in March/April and planting of long-cycle crops in April/May, there will be some demand for agricultural labor. However, food security will likely deepen and be most severe from July to September. During this time, most planting labor opportunities will not be available, PSNP benefits will likely not be distributed to eligible households, and prices will remain high.

#### 4. Northern Amhara and Central Tigray: lowlands and midlands in the Tekeze River Catchment in Wag Himra, North Gondar, and Central Tigray Region

##### Current Situation

Similar to last year, [cumulative June to September Kiremt 2015 rainfall](#) was far below average. Unlike last year, some midlands in Sekota, Janamora, Ebnat, and Belesa Woredas were also much drier than usual. The *Kiremt* rains ended early at the beginning of September, and it has been warmer than usual (Figure 16) and dry since then.

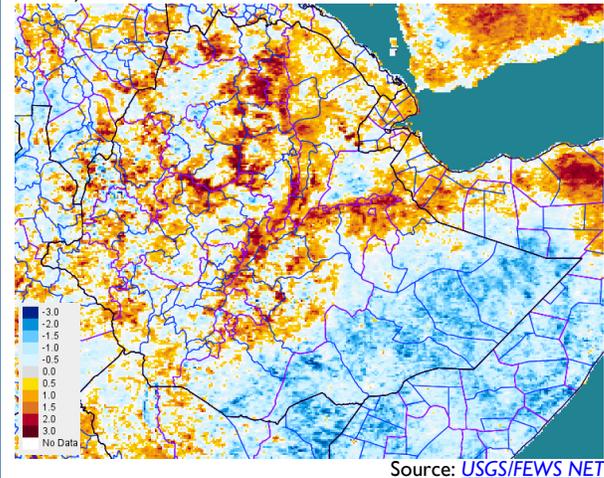
Planted area was below average. Many crops were planted late in August, and while they are currently at the flowering and seed-setting stages, many have wilted and not all of the crops will reach maturity. Planted crops in most lowlands has wilted or dried. Crop growth has been slow, and in most cases, yields have likely been reduced even in the midlands.

Forage and water for livestock are difficult to find. There was some pasture growth after the heavier rains in August, but many households allowed their livestock to consume crop residues of wilted or immature crops. Livestock are being trekked longer distances than normal for the rainy season between water and forage. In many cases, livestock have to be trekked to the Tekeze River to be watered. Woreda officials have requested water trucking in East Belesa Woreda of North Gondar.

During the lean season, cereal supply in markets has been drawn down, and thus, staple food prices have seasonally increased. Most staple food prices in September were above last year. Livestock supply has abnormally increased as households have sought additional income. Unusually, cattle are being sold on some markets where livestock trade is uncommon.

There is a scabies outbreak in Wag Himra. Child Health Day (CHD) screenings for acute malnutrition in September in Wag Himra Zone found the proportion of screened children under the age of five to be 23 percent with moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and two percent with severe acute malnutrition (SAM).

**Figure 16.** MODIS land surface temperature (LST), October 11-20, 2015 as a standard deviation (SD/z-score) of 2002-2014 records



Poor households in the lowlands are near the typical end of their lean season, and at this time of year, their food is entirely purchased on markets instead of being from their own agricultural production. However, they have less income from agricultural labor than normal and poorer livestock body conditions have reduced their income from livestock sales. With seasonally high cereal prices, they are unable to afford adequate quantities of food. Poor and very poor households in the lowlands are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). At the area level, all woredas in Wag Himra Zone and most woredas in North Wollo Zone are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). Most of the midlands have slightly more access to labor opportunities and poor households are Stressed (IPC Phase 2). At the area level, this means the eastern part of North Gonder Zone and a few slightly higher elevation woredas in western North Wollo Zone are currently Stressed (IPC Phase 2)

#### Assumptions

No additional assumptions other than the national assumptions described above have been used.

#### Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

In the lowlands, the *Meher* harvest in November/December will be the third below-average *Meher* harvest in a row. As the dry season starts, livestock body conditions will deteriorate further, driving livestock prices even lower. By January, as staple food prices increase and labor opportunities become less available, households will have growing food consumption gaps and remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through at least March. At the area level, this includes all of Wag Himra Zone and most of North Wollo Zone remaining in Crisis (IPC Phase 4). In the midlands, there will be slightly more crop production, but many households will move into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) by January. Additional woredas in North Wollo Zone will move into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between January and March.

The lean season is likely to start as early as March in this area, instead of July. As both households and markets exhaust their initial stocks, rising prices will cause more households to consume less food. The most severe food insecurity in this area will be during the peak of the lean season from July to September. During this time, households are unable to do planting or harvest labor, two key types of income. Also, the PSNP will no longer be distributing benefits, and poor households will likely have already sold remaining livestock.

### 5. Eastern Amhara and Tigray: *Belg*-producing areas North and South Wollo Zones and Southern Tigray Zone

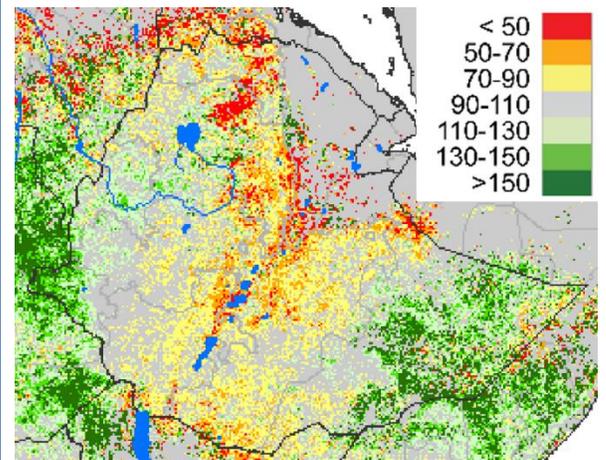
#### Current Situation

Below-average February to May *Belg* rainfall led to a well below average *Belg* harvest in June/July with many areas reporting almost no *Belg* crops being harvested (Figure 17). [The June to September Kiremt rainfall](#) was also below average. *Meher* cereals would typically be at the flowering to seed-setting stages, but most crops are not this developed yet. Chocolate spot and white rust have damaged many of the peas and beans.

Availability of pasture and water for livestock is fairly typical following rains in August and early September. Forage availability increased following these rains. Livestock are also consuming crop residues from the *Belg* and *sinar*, a variety of oats planted for fodder. Livestock body conditions are typical for this time of year.

Stocks of staple foods on markets are being drawn down, but prices for sorghum and maize have remained stable for the past several months. However, many households are buying the cheaper *wodiacre* sorghum variety.

**Figure 17.** Cumulative evapotranspiration anomaly (ETa), January 1-July 31, 2015 as percent of 2003-2013 median



Source: [USGS/FEWS NET](#)

The bi-annual standard nutrition survey (BAN2015) in July 2015 found a global acute malnutrition (GAM) prevalence of 13.3 percent (CI 9.9 to 17.6) in Dessie Zuria Woreda in South Wollo Zone. This is the highest recorded GAM prevalence for a survey in South Wollo Zone in the last two years. Since 2012, GAM in Dessie Zuria has ranged from 13.4 percent (CI 10.6 to 16.8) in April 2012 to 11.2 percent (CI 8.4 to 14.7) in December 2014.

Households have long since consumed all of their *Belg* crops. Therefore, households are purchasing staple foods on markets. With less income than usual from livestock sales and agricultural labor, households are not able to purchase adequate quantities of food. Thus, poor and very poor households in these areas are currently in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

### Assumptions

No additional assumptions other than the national assumptions described above have been used.

### Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

The November/December *Meher* harvest is likely to be far below average due to many crops not reaching maturity and yield reductions from crop diseases. With continued low incomes from livestock sales and labor and rising cereal prices, households will continue to be unable to purchase adequate quantities of food and remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through at least March.

As the *Belg* rains start in February/March, land preparation and planting of *Belg* crops will occur. This will increase demand for agricultural labor. At that time, access to pasture for livestock should also increase. Despite some income though, household purchasing power will remain low due to rising staple food prices. Households are likely to have their largest food consumption gaps between March and June, during an extended lean season. As the *Belg* harvest starts in July though, many households will become more secure as they consume their own produced crop and have income from crop sales, sales of healthy higher-value livestock, and income from harvest labor.

## 6. Central and eastern Amhara: Lowlands in the Abay River Catchment in East Gojam and South Wollo Zones

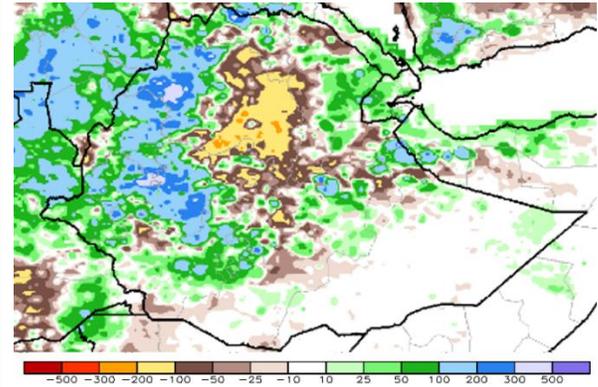
### Current Situation

The *Kiremt* rains usually start in early June, but the heaviest rain is typically in July and August. While the earlier, lighter part of rains in June were somewhat typical, in July and August, some areas only had two to four days of rains. Cumulative [June to September Kiremt rainfall](#) was far below average (Figure 18).

Long-cycle sorghum and maize are planted in April. These were planted this year, but very little of these long-cycle crops reached maturity. Teff is the primary cereal and was planted at a typical time in June. However, much of the teff has wilted or dried up completely. This land has been replanted with shorter-cycle teff varieties, chickpeas, and vetch in August and early September. Households would normally be consuming the green harvest and some early-maturing dry harvest. However, thus far, there are no green crops ready to consume. Even though there was some rain in September and early October, most of the planted crops are still far behind in their growth, and some crops may not reach maturity.

Forage and water availability for livestock are much lower than normal. As a result, livestock are being trekked much longer distances than usual, as most livestock are being watered at the Abay River. The government distributed emergency livestock fodder in these areas in July and August. However, in July and August, it was reported that 2,315 head of livestock died due to low availability of forage. Even though availability of forage and water for livestock increased after some heavier rains in early August, livestock body conditions remain poorer than usual. In particular, cattle body conditions are poor. With poor body conditions, cattle prices have significantly declined. An ox in September in Gindewoin in East Gojam Zone was 40 percent less than last year. While goat and sheep prices have also fallen, trade continues as demand appears to be higher for small ruminants than for cattle.

**Figure 18.** June 1-September 30, 2015 rainfall anomaly in millimeters (mm) from 1981-2010 mean, African Rainfall Climatology (ARC2) data



Source: [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)/Climate Prediction Center \(CPC\)](#)

Staple food prices have increased since June as supplies in markets were drawn down and traders anticipated lower production this coming year. Cereal prices are much higher than last year. For instance, in September, the teff price in Gindewoin in East Gojam Zone and other markets in these areas was more than 25 percent higher than last year.

Some households are harvesting and consuming early-maturing crops. Households have some income from crop sales, livestock sales, and agricultural labor. With seasonally high food prices though, poor and very poor households are needing to save money from non-food expenses to meet their minimum food needs. They are currently Stressed (IPC Phase 2).

### Assumptions

No additional assumptions other than the national assumptions described above have been used.

### Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

While the *Meher* harvest will be below average, households will harvest some long-cycle crops and late-planted *Meher* crops. They will be able to sell or consume these. There will also be some income from agricultural labor. Crop residues should help households maintain livestock body conditions for higher demand for sales in December and January. With the harvest, some labor income, and continued livestock sales, households will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from October to December. Poor households will likely exhaust their stocks early in January instead of April or May. Crop residues will also have been consumed earlier than usual. During the dry season from January to March, livestock body conditions will deteriorate, and prices and then income from livestock sales will fall. With little income from labor or from livestock sales combined with rising staple food prices, poor households will increasingly be unable to purchase adequate quantities of food. They will move into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from January to March as they develop food consumption gaps.

After March, even better off households will have consumed their food stocks from the harvest, several months earlier than usual. As staple food prices increase further from March to May, households will have little labor income with which to purchase food. While there will be some income from land preparation and planting from May to July, high prices will still keep many households out of the market. The lean season may start as early as March or April, but households will likely have the largest food consumption gap from July to September during the peak of the *Meher*-growing lean season.

## 7. SNNPR: Lowlands of Sidama, Gamo Gofa, Wolayita, Hadiya, Kambata Tambaro, Gurage, and Silte Zones, and Halaba Special Woreda

### Current Situation

[Cumulative June to September Kiremt rainfall](#) was below average. The distribution over time was erratic. There was an unusually long dry spell from August 10 through September 10. However, in mid-September and early October, rainfall was a bit heavier and spatial coverage was more even. However, there were torrential storms with very heavy rainfall, high winds, and hail in pockets of Hadiya, Kambata Tambaro, Gurage, Sidama, Wolayita, and Halaba Special Woreda at that time. There was flooding in Shashego Woreda in Hadiya Zone in early October.

*Belg* crops, including haricot beans and Irish potatoes, were harvested in September. *Belg* maize was planted very late, but it has reached maturity, and the harvest has just started. Even with the remaining maize, *Belg* production is estimated to be far below last year and the five-year average (Figure 19).

Due to the dry conditions, *Meher* crops had to be replanted several times as seeds repeatedly failed to germinate. Even with the efforts put into replanting, significant areas of land remained fallow, and planted areas was well below average. The

**Figure 19.** Wilted maize, Humbo Woreda, Wolayita Zone, SNNPR, August 26, 2015



Source: FEWS NET/WFP

*Meher* crops would normally be at the flowering to seed-setting stages in October. However, due to the various timings of the plantings, *Meher* crop stages range from germination/establishment to flowering (Figure 20). Many crops will still require rains in November to sustain their development and reach maturity.

During the rains, pasture did not fully regenerate. Water availability increased during the rains, but many water points did not fully refill. However, these resources continue to be available, if not as widely available as they normally are in October. Crop residues from crops that failed to reach maturity are being used as fodder for livestock. Usually, crop residues are not consumed by livestock until the December to February dry season. In most areas, livestock body conditions have improved since the start of the *Belg* harvest even if they are somewhat poorer than is typical for this time of year. However, livestock body conditions are poorer and milk production remains below-average in northeastern Gurage, Silte, Kambata Tambaro, and Hadiya Zones, and Halaba Special Woreda.

**Figure 20.** Germinated wheat at the seedling stage, Chencha Woreda, Gamo Gofa Zone, SNNPR, August 25, 2015



Source: FEWS NET/WFP

Maize prices have remained generally stable since June or July, but they are higher than last year. For instance, the September maize price in Sodo in Wolayita Zone was 20 percent higher than September 2014. Root crop prices, including for sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, and taro, along with for haricot beans, wheat, sorghum, and hot peppers have risen over the past several months and remain higher than last year. This is likely due to the delayed and below-average *Belg* production of these crops along with traders anticipating less *Meher* production. However, income from coffee sales is less due to low coffee prices. The price of coffee is declining due to lower coffee prices in the international markets this year due to higher production than last year in South America and fluctuations in South American currencies. Lower prices and poor performance of the coffee crop has reduced pay for coffee-related labor and reduced the number of people being hired by the coffee sector. Prices of livestock are generally stable.

In September, 5,459 children were admitted to therapeutic feeding programs (TFP) in SNNPR, 23 percent less than July but 35 percent higher than last year. This likely reflects both that food and water access are less than last year, but food access has increased since the root crop harvest started in September.

October food access increased from recent months due to the harvest of *Belg* root crops, *Belg* haricot beans, and *Meher* vegetables. Agricultural labor demand and income from agricultural labor were less than normal due to poor *Meher* crop performance. There is very little humanitarian assistance, and with less income than usual, households cannot afford enough maize, even though the price is stable. These areas are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

### Assumptions

In addition to the national assumptions above, the projected food security outcomes for SNNPR are based on the following assumptions:

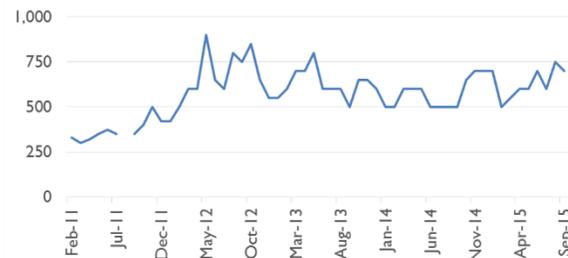
- While some risk of additional damage from rains remains, the anticipated wetter-than-normal October to December period will help late-planted *Meher* crops reach maturity. However, low planted area and lower yields will make the *Meher* harvest below average.
- It was dry during the second flowering of coffee in April and May, and it was again dry during the seed-setting stage of coffee when the coffee berries form in July and August. Thus, coffee plants in Sidama, Gedio, and Kambata Tambaro Zones will not all produce fruit this year, and yields will be less than normal.
- The *Belg* rains are likely to start at a typical time in February.
- Agricultural labor demand will resume at mostly normal levels in February.

### Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

With wetter than normal weather through December and a mostly typical start of the rains in early 2016, livestock body conditions and productivity are likely to be sustained. However, early depletion of crop residues may cause increased competition for forage from December to February during the dry season. If livestock prices remain stable, income from livestock and livestock product sales is likely to remain normal.

With less need for labor for the *Meher* harvest and for coffee, households will have less income from October to December. Due to the expected early depletion of household stocks and less purchasing power, primarily due to less income from agricultural labor, food consumption gaps are likely to grow. More people over a wider area will increasingly be unable to afford adequate quantities of food and will remain or move into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through March.

**Figure 21.** Local-quality goat price (breeding quality), Ethiopian birr (ETB) per head, Gode, Shabelle Zone, Somali Region, February 2011-September 2015



Source: DRM/FSS/Save the Children

Staple food prices are likely to increase further from March to June. While there will be some labor opportunities associated with planting *Belg* crops, weeding, and land preparation, households will have inadequate amounts of income to purchase food. Poor households are likely to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from March to June. However, following two seasons of low agricultural production in 2015, planted area is likely to be average to above average. After the *Belg* harvest in June/July, households will have food they have produced. Labor demand will be high for the harvest, if it is near average in volume. Livestock demand should also return to usual levels. As food security improves, some areas may even move into Minimal (IPC Phase 1) after July as more households regain access to food through their own production and through markets.

## 8. Southern and southeastern pastoral areas: Southern Shebelle Zone in Kelafo, Mustahil, and Ferfer Woredas in southern Somali and the lowlands in South Omo Zone in SNNPR

### Current Situation

In Shebelle Zone, the [March to May Gu rainfall](#) was below average. As a result, pasture did not fully regenerate. During the June to September *Xagaa* dry season, forage availability further declined, and there was less *Gu* crop residue to feed livestock than usual. As a result, livestock production and productivity declined. Households thus have less milk to consume or sell and fewer livestock in saleable condition. Livestock were migrated to Gode and Danan Woredas in July/August, about two months earlier than usual. This has further reduced milk access for household members who did not migrate with the livestock. Livestock are becoming concentrated in a few areas where there is more pasture, browse, and water. The *Deyr* rains started on time in early October, but pasture and water availability has not increased yet.

In agropastoral areas in Shabelle Zone, households harvested almost no *Gu* maize or sorghum in July and August. In the agropastoral areas of South Omo Zone in SNNPR, only 21 percent of the average planted area was under *Meher* crops due to low rainfall.

In Shebelle Zone, imported staple food prices have been stable. However, after the end of demand for Hajj exports in early September and local demand for Eid al-Adha, the price of a local-quality goat in Gode declined seven percent from August to September (Figure 21). While the prices of imported staple foods were stable, locally-produced cereal prices have grown. Zonal-average maize and sorghum prices increased from August to September by 43 and 25 percent, respectively. Similarly, in South Omo Zone, zonal-average maize, sorghum, and wheat prices in September were 11, nine, and 15 percent higher than last year.

Despite the depletion of household stocks in agropastoral areas, declining livestock production and productivity, and low livestock-to-locally-produced cereals terms of trade, households continue to purchase food but are unable to cover other essential expenses. They are currently Stressed (IPC Phase 2).

### *Assumptions*

In addition to the national assumptions above, the projected food security outcomes for southern Shebelle and the lowlands in South Omo Zone in SNNPR are based on the following additional assumptions:

- With expected above-average October to December rainfall, flooding is likely along the Shebelle River and Omo River. In very heavy storms, some flash floods may occur in low-lying areas.

### *Most Likely Food Security Outcomes*

Following the floods, large territories of both rangeland and areable land are likely to be under water. Already planted crops would be destroyed, and livestock may be trapped by flood waters. Even for other livestock, the availability of forage will be less from October to December. Income from livestock and livestock product sales would decline, and households may lack access to milk. Any remaining food stocks would likely be destroyed by flood waters, and markets may not immediately reopen due to difficulties transporting goods. Humanitarian supplies will face similar difficulties getting to areas of need as traders with commercial supplies. Poor households in these areas will move into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) during October to December while floods occur.

However, once the flood water recede, livestock will benefit from likely higher availability of pasture, browse, and water. Also, many agropastoral areas may plant using the soil moisture left by the flood waters. As markets reopen and become resupplied, and normal seasonal income-earning activities resume, poor households will return Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from January to March as the flood waters recede.

Some of the recession harvesting may not occur until March, which can reduce area available for planting *Gu* crops. If the March to May *Gu* rains are near or above-average, households in most areas will be able to continue to expand their livestock herds. Agropastoralists and pastoralists who lost livestock during the floods can slowly rebuild their herds and replace the lost livestock with new births over the coming year. In general, most areas should remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) after March, though some households may improve to None (IPC Phase 1) as their herds grow, they gain additional income from livestock and livestock product sales, and water availability remains typical.

## EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

**Table 1:** Possible events over the next six months that could change the most-likely scenario.

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
<i>Meher</i> -producing areas	Heavy and unseasonable rainfall in November and December	A further reduction in <i>Meher</i> production would be likely as some crops would not be able to be harvested and the post-harvest losses would be higher than usual. This would reduce the availability of food on markets and reduce household food access.
<i>Belg</i> -producing areas	Below-average February to May <i>Belg</i> rainfall	Another year of below-average <i>Belg</i> production could keep many <i>Belg</i> -producing areas severely food insecure after June, increasing the number of people in need of assistance. In some areas, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) would be possible.
Pastoral areas	Livestock disease outbreaks	Livestock body conditions would deteriorate, and productivity would decline. Reduced milk from lactating animals and reduced income from livestock sales would likely follow.
Southern and southeastern pastoral and agropastoral areas	Far below average October to December <i>Deyr/Hageya</i> rainfall	This would decrease pasture, browse, and water availability and likely lead to higher phases of acute food insecurity in some areas.
Nationwide	Delays in humanitarian assistance or in the distribution of PSNP resources	An increase in the local prevalence of malnutrition would be likely as households further reduce their food consumption.

## ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

To project food security outcomes, FEWS NET develops a set of assumptions about likely events, their effects, and the probable responses of various actors. FEWS NET analyzes these assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to arrive at a most likely scenario for the coming six months. Learn more [here](#).